The UMLS Knowledge Source Server and the NLM/AHCPR Large Scale Vocabulary Test

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The Unified Medical Language System (UMLS) Knowledge Sources are available through the Internet-based UMLS Knowledge Source Server. (See Figure 1.) An increasingly powerful set of lexical programs is also available for use with the UMLS Knowledge Sources or independently for other language processing applications. We have designed a special interface to the Knowledge Source Server for use in the Large Scale Vocabulary Test sponsored by the National Library of Medicine and the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research. (See Figure 2.)

The UMLS Knowledge Source Server can be accessed through an application programming interface, a command-line interface, and through the World Wide Web. The system has been available to interested researchers since 1995 and has been used in a number of applications since that time [1].

The NLM/AHCPR Large Scale Vocabulary Test is designed to determine the extent to which a set of existing vocabularies, taken together, cover the concepts and terminology needed for health care and public health applications [2]. The test should provide the basis for developing a comprehensive health vocabulary that is based on existing terminologies. Participa-
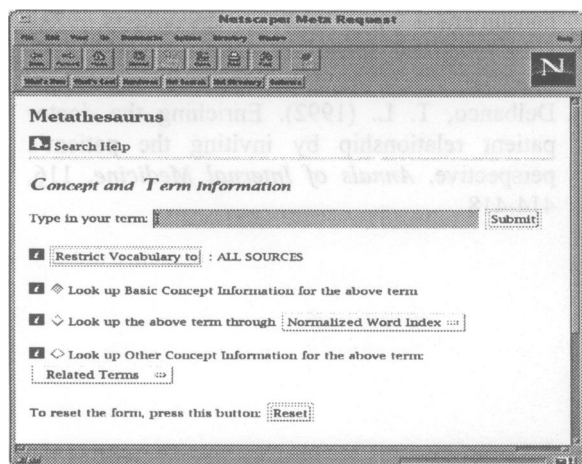

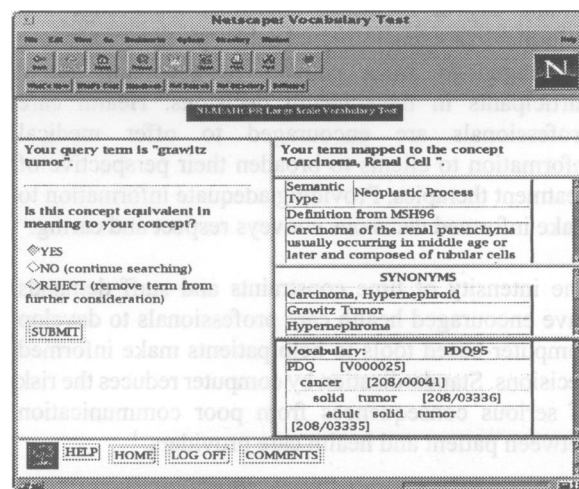Figure 1. Initial WWW screen for searching the UMLS Metathesaurus

Figure 2. Interactive look up of a term in the Large Scale Vocabulary Test

tion in the test is open to anyone who is able to follow the test procedures. Each test participant must have a good Internet connection and a real task for which controlled vocabulary is desired. The test will continue through December 1996.

This poster session will demonstrate the UMLS Knowledge Source Server, the lexical tools, and the procedures for the Large Scale Vocabulary Test.

References

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2. Humphreys B.L., W.T. Hole, A.T. McCray, and M.J. Fitzmaurice. Planned NLM/AHCPR large-scale vocabulary test: Using UMLS technology to determine how well controlled vocabularies cover terminology needed for health care and public health. Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association, Vol. 3, No. 4, 281-287, 1996.